

REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEBUILDING ARCHITECTURE

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Section I: Framing the Review

INTRODUCTION

Process

The mandate of the Review has its origin in the provision of the founding Resolutions of the Peacebuilding Commission that the new arrangements would be reviewed after a period of five years. The founding Resolutions were adopted in December 2005; the Co-facilitators of the Review were appointed in December 2009.

Throughout the six months of the Review process, we have been heartened by the levels of interest and engagement in this exercise. The groundswell of support for peacebuilding is strong, cross-regional, and encompasses government, wider political and civil society actors. An annex summarises the consultations held in the course of the Review process and our Report attempts to capture a very wide range of inputs. Although a succinct report cannot do justice to the detail of each submission, we hope that all who gave of their time will find some reflection of their ideas.

Context

The Co-facilitators are conscious of the weight of expectation on this Review. While the hopes which accompanied the 2005 Resolutions have yet to be realised, the needs which gave rise to these Resolutions remain as great as ever. Indeed, the peacebuilding challenge continues to grow: the World Development Report 2011 will confirm that conflict remains the single most important impediment to development.

The Review is taking place in a context of rapidly changing international realities, with inescapable consequences for the United Nations. Our consultations have brought some fundamental questions into focus: are we facing a paradigm shift in the UN peacekeeping model? Does a more relevant United Nations require a radical re-think of the relationship between Headquarters and the field? Are we still collectively failing to address the root causes of conflict and disproportionately focussing on the symptoms?

The Review also coincides with key dates on the UN calendar. This year's rededication to the Millennium Development Goals is provoking new and challenging debate about delivery on the targets set in 2000. The discussion on UN reform is intensifying, including questions about the equitable participation of the developing world in decision-making processes. Developments regarding System-Wide Coherence have a particular relevance for a process as multi-faceted as peacebuilding.

A key task for the Co-facilitators has been to set the appropriate boundaries for the Review. A very wide interpretation of our mandate would draw us into sweeping commentary on UN reform issues; a very narrow one would not do justice to the scale of the challenge. In trying to find middle ground, we have seen our task as reinvigorating the vision of 2005 and making it more realisable.

The Hopes of 2005

The principal reference point is the 2005 texts; Resolutions 60/180 and 1645, adopted simultaneously in the General Assembly and the Security Council respectively. Setting these Resolutions in the context of the accompanying debate conveys a vivid sense of the hopes which attended their adoption. The new peacebuilding architecture was seen as a determined and ambitious effort to fill a critical void. The President of the General Assembly, speaking of “a genuinely historic moment,” summed up the general sentiment.

Although Resolutions 60/180 and 1645 brought the new bodies into operation, the actual founding decision was taken at the World Summit in September 2005. The Summit deliberations in turn were grounded in a decade of earlier work. As far back as 1995, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s “An Agenda for Peace” defined and discussed peacebuilding. The debate was taken forward in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change of December 2004; this in turn informed Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s seminal 2005 report “In Larger Freedom”. In summary: the decision to establish the new architecture was taken at the highest level, with ample advance consideration, and attended by the highest expectations. This is the backdrop against which performance has to be assessed.

How would ‘success’ have looked in 2010?

Without being unduly speculative, it is reasonable to extrapolate from the 2005 texts and discussion how the peacebuilding architecture might have looked in 2010 if the expectations of 2005 had been fully met. One would have assumed a wider demand from countries to come on the PBC Agenda; that – where it had been involved – there would be a clearer sense of how PBC engagement had made a difference on the ground; that peacebuilding would have a higher place among UN priorities; that stronger relationships would have been forged between the PBC and the Security Council, the General Assembly and ECOSOC; that the PBC would carry more weight within the Secretariat; and that the PBC would be perceived as a key actor by those outside as well as inside the UN system, including by the international financial institutions.

A Qualified Record

That this threshold of success has not been achieved needs to be squarely acknowledged. This is not to understate what has been accomplished, and certainly not to devalue the unfailing commitment shown by many dedicated member State representatives - especially those with chairing responsibilities - and Secretariat staff. The new institutions are up and running; they have kept a focus on countries emerging from conflict that receive insufficient international attention, and in some cases have promoted better planning, more inclusive political dialogue, and more effective resource mobilisation than would otherwise have happened.

However, the momentum that carried the process forward up to and including December 2005 was not sustained at the same pace. The protracted discussion on procedural issues created a hiatus. Member States who were considerably exercised about securing a seat on the Organisational Committee have not always invested commensurate energy in discharging the responsibilities of membership. The PBSO has struggled to find an identity which would enable it to fulfil an effective coordinating role on peacebuilding issues across the UN Secretariat.

At the Crossroads

Incremental improvements have undoubtedly occurred during the lifetime of the new institutions. Successive PBC Chairs and Chairs of Country-Specific Configurations have worked with devotion, and with some success, to enhance the relevance of the Commission's work. The PBF has been twice reviewed. The PBSO, also benefitting from dedicated leadership, has begun to settle down, and some important outputs have been or are currently being prepared.

Something more, however, is required if the vision and ambition of 2005 is to be restored. The Organisation is still not rising to the peacebuilding challenge. There needs to be a new level of attention and resolve on the part of member States and the top echelons of the Secretariat. Either there is a conscious re-commitment to peacebuilding at the very heart of the UN's work, or the PBC settles into the limited role that has been developed so far. From our consultations, we sense a strong desire by the membership to follow the former path.

Some Key Issues

At the outset, the Co-facilitators wish to set out a number of key issues and concerns which underpin the detail of this Report.

(I) The Complexity of Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding of its nature is a complicated process: rebuilding fragile or shattered relationships inevitably takes time. It does not lend itself to compartmentalisation or ‘boots on the ground’ measurement. Organisations such as the UN and the IFIs can find it inherently difficult to deal with this complexity and inter-relatedness. There is inevitably a gravitational pull, for organisations and donors, towards the concrete and more readily measurable.

These complexities, even if recognised at the establishment of the new architecture, are perhaps still not fully internalised. There is impatience for the PBC to construct its narrative, to find its success stories, to define precisely its added value. These are legitimate concerns and the Review seeks to address them. But the Organisation must adjust to the realities: the need is for the UN to continually reappraise its own structures and prioritise its approach to ensure they match needs on the ground.

(II) The Imperative of National Ownership

Put simply, people must own their own peace: it has to begin, grow and become embedded in people’s minds. It follows that peacebuilding can only happen within communities and within a country. ‘National ownership’ is not something that is merely desirable or politically correct; it is an imperative, an absolute essential, if peacebuilding is to take root.

The principle of national ownership is widely invoked and accepted; the challenge is to work through the full range of implications. The international community must understand the limits of its role as midwife to a national birthing process. In the countries concerned, ownership cannot be approached as a right wrested from the international community: what people need and require of their governments is that they exercise the responsibilities conferred by ownership.

The PBC needs to ensure that national ownership genuinely and comprehensively underpins its work. In multiple ways – helping to build administrative capacity, promoting dialogue, encouraging a definition of ‘national ownership’ that fully embraces all stakeholders – it must go beyond mantra to substance.

(III) The Illusion of Sequencing

There is acceptance in all quarters that sequencing does not work; that effective peacebuilding must not follow peacekeeping operations but accompany them from their inception. This is not a new insight: it was clearly articulated, for example, in the Brahimi Report – and now in the New Horizon approach.

Despite this acknowledgement, there is a widespread sense that the sequential approach remains the dominant one in the UN. Even if modest elements of peacebuilding are incorporated in mandates, the focus and mindset of operations is a peacekeeping one. Peacebuilding tends to be viewed as an add-on during the lifetime of the peacekeeping operation, expected to come into its own in the aftermath.

Such a sequential approach neither gives adequate weight to peacebuilding nor responds to needs and realities on the ground. In the current context of debate about the future of a number of UN peacekeeping operations, the question has assumed a further relevance.

The challenge is to ensure that doctrinal or philosophical shifts are fully reflected in new organisational approaches. The obstacles in the way of this – not least the differing financial arrangements underpinning peacekeeping and peacebuilding – are formidable. But meaningful steps can be taken, both in the design of mandates by the Security Council and in the allocation of resources.

The issue of sequencing relates also to the discussion about a preventive role for the PBC. Realities on the ground are not compartmentalised: there can be slides towards conflict or relapses into conflict where lines are crossed almost imperceptibly. The PBC needs to be fully alert to these realities and mindful of the preventive dimension in its existing mandate.

(IV) The Urgency of Resource Mobilisation

The PBC's role in helping to ensure predictable financing for post-conflict recovery is recognised in the founding Resolutions, and was seen from the outset as a key dimension of its work.

It is well understood that peacebuilding requires a parallel addressing of political, security and developmental needs. As conflict ends, people desperately need to live free from fear and free from hunger. To the extent that they can do so, they experience a peace dividend and their resolve to move forward is strengthened. With so many strands interwoven, failure in any one area can reverse progress in others.

Recognising this inter-relatedness, the point nevertheless was repeatedly made to us that it is the failure to deal with basic developmental needs that poses the biggest risk of dragging a country back into conflict. Study after study has shown that underdevelopment and conflict are intimately related. The PBC clearly should not seek to duplicate the work of development agencies. But it must be a strong and persistent voice in calling for the integration of political and developmental perspectives, and in reminding the international community that food, shelter and jobs are also essential tools of peacebuilding.

Resource mobilisation for peacebuilding needs to be both ambitious and focussed. The PBC's role is essentially an advocacy one - a relentless advocacy for the allocation of adequate resources to those critical and urgent issues which, if they remain unaddressed or unfunded, have the potential to threaten peace. Across the widest possible range of actors - within the UN, the IFIs, the private sector - it must seek to leverage resources on the scale necessary to make a real difference, and its relevance and success will in very significant part be demonstrated by its capacity to do so.

(V) The Importance of Women's Contribution

The PBC has the distinction of being the first UN body to have the gender dimension explicitly built into its founding Resolutions. The potential contribution which women can make to peace processes hardly needs reiteration. It will be underlined again in the forthcoming Secretary-General's report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding, which is expected to contain clear and action-oriented recommendations.

The PBC has so far not lived up to its strong and specific mandate in this regard. There have been some successes in involving women's organisations, but their voices are insufficiently heard, especially in the field. The exhortation to integrate gender concerns across peacebuilding work has also met with limited success. The gender perspective needs more fully to filter down through the Country-Specific Configurations and inform every aspect of peacebuilding work on the ground. Women's role in peacebuilding needs to move from a niche concern to the mainstream, and the PBC should be at the forefront of that movement.

(VI) The Need for Connection with the Field

The appropriate slide-rule for measuring success or failure of the peacebuilding architecture is how much it matters in the field. Throughout the Review, the Co-facilitators have repeatedly been reminded that preoccupations and perspectives on the ground can differ quite radically from those in the corridors of New York. In the area of strategic planning, for example, the kind of exercise that looks reasonable and appropriate in New York may be perceived in the field as excessively burdensome, adding another layer of tasks to an already overstretched and fragile administration. A similar difference of perspective is evident in other areas.

In their field contacts, the Co-facilitators have been struck by the lack of basic understanding of the UN peacebuilding architecture: how it operates and what it offers. The gap that has opened up between HQ and the field must be a matter of concern; we strongly hope that one of the outcomes of this Review will be to narrow that gap.

Section II: In the Field

The first part of this Section summarises some experiences to date of each of the four Agenda countries; we look also at the perspectives of potential candidates. The second part seeks to identify some of the key points emerging.

Countries on the PBC Agenda

Each of the four Agenda countries is of course different and has experienced the PBC differently. Sierra Leone and Burundi were placed on the Agenda in June 2006; Guinea-Bissau in December 2007 and the Central African Republic in June 2008. Given the much longer period of engagement, there has been scope for evolution over time in the relationship with Sierra Leone and Burundi. Despite initial difficulties, both are now seen as generally positive experiences resulting in some concrete benefits. Guinea-Bissau and CAR were further back on the road to peace when they came on the PBC Agenda and have more serious capacity and resource issues. Guinea-Bissau continues to suffer gravely from political instability and has had limited benefit from PBC engagement.

Attention; Political Accompaniment

In cataloguing the benefits, it can be said that all four countries have experienced, to varying degrees, an increment of international attention as a result of engagement with the PBC. This is especially important for countries perceiving themselves to be suffering an 'attention deficit' on the part of the international community.

The PBC has also played a role in promoting inclusive political dialogue in all four countries. It helped to facilitate a peaceful election process in Sierra Leone in 2007 and subsequently, in the aftermath of the political violence of March 2009, provided a political umbrella for the ERSG to lead negotiations between the political parties. In Burundi, PBC efforts led to the establishment of a Permanent Forum for Dialogue and helped to create an environment conducive to the holding of elections. In CAR, the PBC supported an all-inclusive national political dialogue in December 2008 and gave parties the necessary encouragement to establish an Electoral Commission. In the difficult circumstances of Guinea-Bissau, the PBC has called for calm and dialogue during periods of turmoil.

Planning

The experience in relation to planning has been mixed. In Sierra Leone, the "Agenda for Change" has replaced the proliferation of political, security and development plans previously in place; having a single planning document has improved coherence and national ownership, and reduced the administrative burden on the country. The "Agenda for Change", however, was agreed only after an extensive period of institutional dispute within and between the UN system and its partners, and after the PBC initially sought to develop a separate Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding.

There was a parallel experience in Burundi. The effort required initially to draw up and implement a Strategic Framework was felt to be extremely onerous. As in Sierra Leone, a compromise was eventually reached, resulting in a single strategy document which better reflects national priorities and is more focussed and realisable.

Notwithstanding the experiences in Sierra Leone and Burundi, the CSCs for CAR and Guinea-Bissau went down the road of separate peacebuilding strategies. The fact that in both cases the drafting processes were prolonged, and to some degree duplicated the existing Poverty Reduction Strategies and other texts, was a source of frustration for actors on the ground. Given the limited national capacity in these countries, the administrative burden of drawing up, implementing and monitoring the Strategic Framework has been particularly felt.

The uneven involvement of national stakeholders in the process of drawing-up peacebuilding priorities has also been commented on. In some cases, civil society organisations have felt marginalised and – despite the PBC’s explicit mandate to integrate a gender perspective – women’s groups in particular have complained of inadequate engagement.

Resource Mobilisation

The record as regards resource mobilisation is also mixed. There have been PBF allocations in all four cases: US\$37m to Sierra Leone, US\$40m to Burundi; US\$31m allocation to CAR; and US\$6m to Guinea-Bissau. In the case of all four countries, efforts have been made to mobilise resources more widely. In Sierra Leone, for example, following strong advocacy by the PBC, key partners joined forces to produce a *Joint Response to Youth Employment*. In Burundi, the CSC played a role in breaking the impasse over the sixth IMF replenishment for the country. Co-sponsorship of the donors’ round-table held in Bujumbura in May 2007 produced pledges of increased financial support.

There has been some success in resource mobilisation for CAR. The PBC established a dialogue with the World Bank concerning the country’s progress towards reaching the completion point of the HIPC initiative in June 2009, and this dialogue continues. A list of peacebuilding projects in need of funding is also being prepared, and has managed to elicit the interest of some new partners. In Guinea-Bissau, contributions from PBC members to support the elections in November 2008 were partly a response to CSC advocacy. Continued increases in assistance from the African Development Bank, IMF and World Bank to Guinea-Bissau are also in part attributable to the PBC’s role.

Despite the efforts being made, resource mobilisation is falling well short of needs. The constraints are clear (in Guinea-Bissau, for example, political instability greatly complicates the task) and it is essential that the PBC approach remains realistic and focussed on needs that are distinctively or strongly associated with peacebuilding. Efforts need to intensify, and this issue re-emerges throughout our Report.

Perspectives of Potential Agenda Countries

In 2005, the expectations of potential PBC benefits were such that there was a concern that the number of countries wishing to be considered would overwhelm its capacity. That has not proved to be the case. It is clear that, for a number of potential candidates, the perceived 'risk-to-reward ratio' has not favoured engagement. The Co-facilitators held a number of meetings to try to better understand the perspectives of countries which have preferred not to come on the PBC Agenda.

There is undoubtedly some sense of the potential advantages attached to PBC engagement: the international attention and political accompaniment which the PBC promises can be attractive. Offset against these potential benefits, however, is the perception of potential downsides. Being on the Agenda may be seen as an indication of dysfunctionality. The heavy administrative burden of PBC engagement can be off-putting. We saw some evidence of a mistaken perception that entering the PBC Agenda would imply the loss of Security Council attention and the automatic draw-down of a peacekeeping operation.

It was clear to us that some potential candidates would see a lighter form of PBC engagement as more appropriate to their circumstances than the creation of a fully-fledged Country-Specific Configuration. Such engagement might focus specifically on the peacebuilding process in the country, or on a sector requiring attention. The Co-facilitators see benefit in having such a 'light option' available and, in the following Section, we consider how it might be given practical effect.

Issues Arising from Country Experiences

The experience on the ground brings a number of issues into perspective, some of which are dealt with later in the Report. In this Section the Co-facilitators wish to comment on issues of national ownership and capacity-building; developmental and particularly employment-generation challenges; coordination and coherence; and also briefly to consider the regional dimension of peacebuilding. Responding to the confusion and misunderstandings we perceive in the field, we also underline the importance of developing an effective communications strategy.

(I) National Ownership and Capacity Issues

In the introductory Section, the Co-facilitators underlined their conviction that national ownership must underpin the entire peacebuilding effort. From our exposure to the situation in the field, it is clear to us that the PBC has not yet been able to generate a full sense of national ownership in critical areas.

Perhaps the most crucial stage of establishing ownership is the planning process. Even if they are rudimentary or slow to emerge, national inputs should from the outset form the basis of the engagement of the international community. A stake

for national actors must be built in by establishing mechanisms to transfer the management and implementation of plans and projects to the government and its national partners.

Given the likelihood of an inverse relationship between the length and complexity of the planning document and the degree of genuine national ownership, the Co-facilitators suggest a planning approach that is light but inclusive. Bearing in mind that 'no one size fits all', we are not proposing a single template. On balance, however, it seems that the stand-alone Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies have generated more difficulties than benefits. There are clear advantages to a single overarching planning document (with whatever title the national authorities wish to confer) around which national authorities and the international community can coalesce. This single text should contain well-defined peacebuilding elements worked out with the full involvement of all stakeholders.

The experiences in the four Agenda countries illustrate the vital connection between ownership and capacity: unless local actors have the capacity to fully engage throughout all phases of planning and implementation, national ownership will remain theory rather than reality. In making this point, the Co-facilitators emphasise that it is essential to avoid any risk that lack of capacity becomes an alibi for avoiding potential difficulties associated with involving national actors; rather it should galvanise the international community behind the key task of capacity-building.

Building capacity in national administrations is critical but not of itself sufficient; there is also a need to build capacity across the board. Although the PBC has had some success in bringing together political parties, civil society, the private sector and others, more must be done to ensure that these groups are in a position to engage meaningfully in the peacebuilding process. The record regarding women's organisations is particularly thin.

(II) Developmental Aspects of Peacebuilding

It is widely acknowledged that there can be no peace without development and no development without peace. Our introductory Section underlined the urgency of prioritising development and ensuring its full integration into peacebuilding efforts in countries emerging from conflict. All four countries on the PBC Agenda face a range of development challenges and responding to these challenges is one of the most crucial aspects of building peace.

Youth unemployment in particular is identified as a potential Achilles' heel in any peacebuilding process. Youth who have been caught up in conflict are vulnerable to being drawn into destructive patterns of behaviour if left idle and without the means to support themselves. The need to develop strategies to attract young people back into purposeful civilian life must be a key priority.

The Co-facilitators are conscious that employment generation is a challenge in all economies and an acute one in many developing countries. But the connection between job creation and peacebuilding needs clear and specific focus. It is

imperative that all avenues to enhance local employment are availed of. Local procurement, for example, can create significant opportunities and the international community needs to demonstrate a stronger awareness of this in its local engagement. Many conflict-affected countries are also resource-rich; there needs to be a strong emphasis on local employment in mineral extraction, and transfer of skills should be made a condition for investment.

(III) Coordination and Coherence

The whole PBC concept is built around complementarity and partnership. The PBC should help to provide political support to UN peacebuilding missions, which in turn should reflect UN peacebuilding principles and priorities in their operation. It is especially important that there is a mutually-reinforcing relationship with the Special Representatives and UN country teams. The SRSG/ERSG has a mandate and continuous local presence which confers a particular role and authority. The PBC members represent peer governments, with the empathy and capacity for dialogue which is inherent in a peer relationship. Each should be conscious of empowering the other.

In practice, the international community still struggles to achieve the necessary degree of coherence in the field. The first challenge is to integrate fully the work of UN actors on the ground in a country, based on joint planning and clear inventories of actions so as to avoid duplication. The relationship between the PBC and the SRSG/ERSG needs to be properly worked through, with full accommodation for the lead SRSG/ERSG role on the ground. The second challenge is to improve coordination among the different international partners. The existence of a single strategic document does not guarantee that all actors will act in accordance with its priorities. The PBC must use its political weight to seek to align the various actors behind the same overarching objectives.

If the integration of UN missions works as intended, the prospects of peacebuilding will be greatly enhanced. Fragmentation, territoriality and competition among UN actors as well as among international organisations and donors generally are corrosive of the entire aid effort, and will critically undermine the peacebuilding effort.

(IV) Regional Dimension

Experience in all four Agenda countries underlines the regional dimension of conflict. There is ample evidence of the potential for cross-border spill-over which can create or exacerbate conflict and frustrate peacebuilding efforts. On the positive side, there is the potential for regional organisations to play a crucial role in helping to consolidate peace as countries emerge from conflict.

Some problems are inherently of a cross-border nature, e.g. drug trafficking or the management of displaced persons, and require regional cooperation if they are to be effectively tackled. Other challenges may be primarily domestic, e.g. youth

unemployment or issues surrounding the extraction of natural resources, but are common to several countries in a region, and benefit from joint discussion.

National ownership also benefits from being seen in the context of regional and continental ownership. Many countries may prefer to receive assistance and advice from peer countries in their own region, and regional organisations may be better placed to intervene in a timely manner and to assist in grappling with certain sensitive issues, particularly where the government itself is part of the problem.

For all these reasons, it is clear that the PBC must give even further weight to the regional dimension than has been the case so far. There may be some cases where Region-Specific Configurations would be more logical and hold greater promise of progress than Country-Specific Configurations and this should be an available option. Additionally, the Co-facilitators urge that every opportunity is availed of to enhance the engagement with regional organisations; we revert to this later in the Report.

(V) Communications Strategy

From our contacts at HQ but particularly on the ground, it is clear to the Co-facilitators that there is a very incomplete understanding of the breadth of the PBC mandate. In part, this may arise from the inherent complexity of the peacebuilding task and the consequent difficulty of neat mission statements or promises of short-term outcomes. However, the issue goes beyond this: there appears to be a major communication gap in which misperceptions and misunderstandings about the PBC role have taken root.

The confusion relates in particular to the PBC-PBF relationship. The PBF was conceived as a complement to the PBC work but in some respects seems to have obscured it. Because it was established at the same time and operates in parallel to the PBC, there is a tendency to view the PBC as primarily a route to PBF funding. This not only misinterprets the relationship between the PBC and the PBF, but it makes it more difficult to create the space in which the PBC was intended to operate.

The PBC together with the PBSO urgently needs to develop a communications strategy that has a strong field focus but is also targeted at member States in New York and the Secretariat. The purpose of such a strategy should be to identify in accessible terms how the peacebuilding architecture is constituted and how the elements interact. It should spell out succinctly the benefits that the PBC offers: key among these are *attention, accompaniment, advocacy*. The 'brand' needs to be repositioned to become much more positive: the PBC represents an innovative and modern approach in which the international community accompanies conflict-affected countries as they chart their own future. The key message is not one of dysfunctionality, but of determination and resolve.

Section II: Summary of Recommendations

Capacity; Planning; Levels of Engagement; Regional Dimension

- *Increase the focus on capacity-building across the board - national administrations, political parties, civil society including women's organisations - so as to build expertise and ensure sustainability*
- *Lighten the administrative burden; a single overall planning document should include peacebuilding elements developed through a participatory and inclusive process*
- *Introduce more flexibility, with possibilities of multi-tiered engagement*
- *Strengthen the regional dimension across all aspects of the PBC work*

Resource Mobilisation

- *Intensify overall resource mobilisation efforts; ensure they are strongly attuned to development challenges with political implications*

Developmental Aspects of Peacebuilding

- *Sharpen the emphasis on employment generation, particularly for youth (local procurement; skills transfer)*

Coherence and Coordination

- *Encourage UN actors in all PBC Agenda countries to integrate further their activities on the ground, under SRSG/ERSG leadership*
- *Utilise the PBC's political weight to align international actors on the ground behind agreed overarching objectives*
- *Ensure clear inventories of peacebuilding activities in Agenda countries so as to avoid duplication*

Communications Strategy

- *Develop an effective communications strategy, which 'rebrands' the PBC and clearly spells out what it can offer*

Section III: At HQ: PBC Role and Performance

The PBC is dealing not just with the inherent complexity of peacebuilding, but with the challenges associated with being a relatively late entrant in a crowded field. Both across the UN and in other international bodies, there has been a significant growth of interest in peacebuilding over recent years. Rather than suggesting any redundancy on the part of the PBC, this proliferation of actors reinforces the need for a focal point. This was precisely what world leaders had in mind in 2005: that the PBC should bring coherence and impetus to the range of efforts.

Becoming an effective focal point in a crowded field was never going to be easy. Both the Organisational Committee and the Country-Specific Configurations continue to face difficulties. But with the role of the latter more concrete and more readily understood, the OC has the greater struggle to establish its mission and its specific added value.

Organisational Committee

An initial comment about attendance levels is perhaps applicable to both the OC and CSCs, although particularly to the OC. If in 2005 the PBC was deemed to be a key institution filling a critical gap, it was reasonable to expect that it would receive commensurate attention from member States. This is not always the case. The Co-facilitators have heard significant comment on the level of attendance. There is perplexity that some countries which apparently attached enormous value to becoming PBC members should routinely be represented at a junior level at OC meetings.

(I) Membership Issues

Issues surrounding the membership of the Organisational Committee surfaced periodically throughout the Review. These issues fall into two categories: firstly the contribution of the different membership streams; secondly the representivity of the PBC.

Contribution of Membership Streams

A distinctive feature of the OC is the make-up of its membership, with members nominated by the Security Council, the General Assembly and ECOSOC, as well as leading donors and troop contributors. The membership formula emerged as the outcome of lengthy negotiations; and it may be inferred that implicit in the formula was some expectation of a specific contribution by each of the various streams and a degree of bridge-building back to the respective nominating bodies.

The PBC as a whole of course acts collectively and reaches decisions by consensus. But it is not unreasonable to suppose that the General Assembly members would bring a General Assembly perspective, as would the Security Council and ECOSOC members in respect of their nominating bodies.

To date, there is little evidence that the various membership streams have been conscious of particular responsibilities by reference to their nominating bodies. A renewed sense on the part of all OC members of the distinctive contributions expected of them – including the scope for particular engagement by the permanent members – would do much to reinvigorate the OC.

Composition of the OC

The question of composition consumed considerable time in 2005 and the formula eventually identified is set out in the founding Resolutions. Opinions may differ as to whether the overall OC membership figure of 31 is too large to be efficient or too small to be appropriately representative. However, we do not see any appetite to reopen a debate that was conducted in 2005 and would be unlikely to lead to any different conclusion if rerun today.

Two issues are nevertheless worth commenting on. Firstly, there is a legitimate concern about adequate rotation to ensure balanced regional representation. A number of delegations emphasised the provision in the founding Resolutions that, to help correct any regional imbalances that may have emerged, the General Assembly elections should take place in the aftermath of other nominating processes. The Co-facilitators endorse the importance of this provision.

Additionally, it was pointed out that the group of ten top financial donors to the UN operates a rotation in choosing its five PBC members; a similar rotation does not apply within the group of ten top troop-contributing countries. Although of course a matter for the troop-contributing countries themselves to decide, the Co-facilitators see validity in the suggestion to have at least some element of rotation within both groups.

A second issue relates to the importance of those countries which are on the PBC Agenda having the right to attend OC meetings. This seems to us self-evidently desirable and we believe it should be given effect, without prejudice to the existing OC membership formula.

(II) Agenda and Working Methods

Significant efforts have been made by successive Chairs of the PBC Organisational Committee to enhance the substance and relevance of its work. These efforts have met with some success. However, there is a widespread sense that the OC still needs more focus and output; many of our interlocutors felt that it has yet to demonstrate that it is making a clear and measurable difference. The identity of the OC still needs to settle down; although the founding Resolutions do not define

responsibilities in detail, the designation of the OC as the “standing” committee of the PBC and the care taken in its composition suggest that a role of substance was intended.

The rhythm and duration of meetings might usefully be considered. If the OC is to give real added value, it is important that attendance be at an appropriate level and include expertise from capitals and the field. This might suggest less frequent meetings of a longer duration. In order to support the work of the OC, a representative bureau with a more developed vice-chairing structure might also be considered, while allowing for the flexibility which is a hallmark of peacebuilding work.

Relationship with CSCs

The OC should remain fully abreast of what is happening in the CSCs, and be ready to give policy guidance and advice as appropriate. Periodic collective consideration would be helpful, with the CSC Chairs together attending open interactive discussions with the OC. This would provide scope for cross-fertilisation in ideas and methodology and for ensuring a general consistency of approach. A more solid relationship with the CSCs would also help to ensure that the OC’s thematic work remains grounded in field realities.

The Co-facilitators are confident that the membership as a whole is sufficiently conscious that ‘no one size fits all’ to ensure there is the necessary flexibility and space for the CSCs. Nor is there any question of the PBC Chair seeking to substitute for the CSC Chairs in their necessary direct interactions with entities inside and outside the UN. But there should be a ‘whole of PBC’ view on a range of issues, and this is best formulated in the OC and articulated by the PBC Chair. A more committed OC membership – exercising the greater level of engagement sketched out above – should be able to draw fully on CSC experience in forming this ‘whole of PBC’ view.

Thematic Issues

As well as having oversight of the overall work programme of the PBC, the OC should identify each year a number of strategic thematic issues on which it would focus for that year. These would comprise issues of high current and operational relevance. The output on each theme would be a subject-specific report which would be presented by the PBC Chair to the Security Council and to the General Assembly. The OC is also the appropriate partner for dialogue on thematic issues with relevant UN entities and other peacebuilding actors.

In addition, the OC should take oversight responsibility for ensuring application of the principle of mutual accountability. Although each of the CSCs should assess mutual accountability in relation to its Agenda country, the OC has an important role in developing the tools that can be used to monitor and track progress. Backed by the PBSO, it should be to the forefront in developing mutual accountability frameworks specifically adapted to the peacebuilding area. In undertaking this work, the OC will be able to draw on lessons learned and on aid accountability research underway in the relevant international bodies.

Lessons Learned

The Co-facilitators considered whether it might make sense for the 'Lessons Learned' function to be returned to the OC. While there was a level of support and some agnosticism among the membership, the balance of opinion seemed to favour retention of the Working Group on Lessons Learned. The Co-facilitators therefore suggest a focus on its better functioning, with a clear rationale for its discussions and clear outcomes. If the OC develops a stronger and more interactive relationship with the CSCs, it may over time come to feel that the lessons learned function is better carried out directly, rather than at one remove in the WGLL. If so, a decision to that effect could be taken at the appropriate time. The capacity to evolve and innovate is intended to be among the PBC hallmarks, and the OC should not hesitate to exercise that capacity.

Country-Specific Configurations

The Country-Specific Configurations have been instrumental in the achievements of the PBC to date. As with the OC, there have been notably dedicated Chairs who have invested very considerable time and effort. The Co-facilitators would not wish in any way to devalue the steps taken, and we also recognise that there are significant differences across the four Configurations. However, we are conscious of a general sense that more could be done, both as regards working methods and substantive output.

(I) Working Methods

As regards the working methods, the challenge might be described as how to combine innovation and vibrancy with weight and solidity. It is important to recall the sense of the founding Resolutions that the PBC would be different from other UN bodies: more flexible and innovative in its working methods. The intention was that the PBC would find new ways to bring together key actors from across the public and private sectors and civil society, whose collective wisdom and energy would be at the service of the countries on the PBC Agenda.

At the same time, there is a clear requirement for weight and solidity. The Configuration Chairs need to be of a certain profile: respected, knowledgeable, able to operate effectively both in New York and in the field. They must have the full confidence of the Agenda countries and also inspire the confidence of key actors. They need to be backed up by solid support from the PBSO and from within their national administrations.

In order to give further depth and solidity to the chairing role, the Co-facilitators suggest that a country dimension should be added. Such an approach would have a number of practical implications. The chairing function would continue to be filled by Permanent Representatives in New York as the persons best placed to discharge the responsibilities of the chairing role. However, the country whose Permanent Representative in New York was appointed as CSC Chair would be expected to demonstrate clear commitment and support at all levels of government, both in capital and in the field. Where the chairing

country has a diplomatic presence in the Agenda country, as might normally be expected to be the case, the Ambassador in situ would be expected to play a useful linking role under the leadership of the SRS/ERSG and the host government. The country dimension would also ensure greater continuity: a country would be expected to commit for a reasonable period of time, and its responsibilities would be unaffected by any turnover in the Permanent Representative position in New York.

There has been considerable discussion of the potential benefits of a PBC configuration in the field which could help to feed and validate the work of the CSC in New York. The Co-facilitators agree that an appropriately-structured country-level liaison committee should be established in each Agenda country and should report regularly to the CSC in New York. The committee should be co-chaired by a representative of the host government and the SRS/ERSG; there should be a broad range of members and a level of attendance commensurate with the PBC's high-level political role. A special role could be envisaged for the Ambassador (if one exists) of the CSC Chair country.

(II) CSC Output

The benefits that a CSC brings to an Agenda country may be summarised as attention; accompaniment; advocacy. Depending on the individual circumstances of the country concerned, each of the three may be needed to different degrees. The challenge at all times is to assess what is of most practical value; what is likely to make a real difference on the ground.

The importance of sustaining international attention is obvious. The second potential benefit – 'high-level political accompaniment' – needs to be offered in a context-specific and appropriate way. The objective is to facilitate and advance the kind of broad-based dialogue that will enable a society to heal and rebuild. All stakeholders, notably civil society including women's groups, are central to that dialogue and therefore must be central to the CSC approach.

The advocacy role can take various forms but will certainly include funding advocacy. As we underline throughout this Report, resource mobilisation is critical to demonstrating PBC relevance and added value. Each CSC must exercise its advocacy role in an energetic and innovative way, reaching across the UN, IFIs and other international and regional organisations, but also embracing regional banks, the private sector and other funding sources. Suggestions we have heard include more donor round-tables under PBC auspices, more active outreach to non-traditional donors, steps to bolster absorption capacity, tapping into remittance flows.

Ensuring mutual accountability is critical to the entire peacebuilding effort and is a natural corollary of resource mobilisation. Applying tools developed by the OC, each CSC should map and track delivery of peacebuilding commitments with respect to its Agenda country. Combining its evaluations of delivery both by national stakeholders and by the international community, the CSC will be in a position to authoritatively assess how each is meeting its responsibilities.

Beyond the above general recommendations, the Co-facilitators do not wish to be overly prescriptive in setting out views as to the functioning and output of the CSCs. We are conscious that the elements of specificity, experimentation and agility are central to the whole CSC design. We also note the expectation that a fifth CSC is likely to be established shortly. This will provide a fresh opportunity to demonstrate how the approach might be further adapted and new avenues explored.

Multi-tiered Engagement

Given a widespread sense that there should be possibilities of multi-tiered engagement (sectoral, regional, 'light footprint'), the Co-facilitators have sought to address the issue of what form should be given to that engagement. The approach of establishing a Country-Specific Configuration as soon as a country comes on the PBC Agenda has worked well to date. A dedicated CSC brings a degree of attention and engagement that is not otherwise possible, and will continue to be the normal vehicle for interaction with a country on the PBC Agenda. Equally, it can be anticipated that, if there is to be a regional referral, the complexity will be such as to require a dedicated regional configuration.

There may, however, be situations where something lighter is required than the full CSC precisely along the lines of the current models. The Co-facilitators sense a general readiness to consider some degree of experimentation, as long as there is a guarantee of the situation receiving the requisite degree of dedicated attention. Options could include, for example, appointment of a country-specific focal point by the PBC Chair, a role for a Vice-Chair in the OC Bureau, or establishment of an informal working group. The engagement instrument would be decided on a case by case basis, by reference to the particular context and in close consultation with the national stakeholders.

Criteria for Entry and Exit

The potential for the PBC to add value is in significant part dependent on the choices made as to which countries or situations form part of its agenda. No matter how dedicated its work, a Country-Specific Configuration will struggle if the situation on the ground is unripe for peacebuilding efforts. Equally, if a country has progressed to a situation where its challenges are essentially developmental rather than distinctively of a peacebuilding nature, it makes little sense to have a continuing PBC focus.

Given the fluidity and specificity of individual circumstances, the Co-facilitators do not believe it appropriate to draw up detailed or technocratic criteria for entry and exit. Referral must rely on informed political judgement. The referring body – to date the Security Council, in future perhaps others – needs to be reasonably confident that the primary effort now required is a peacebuilding one, that there is potential for clear added value in PBC engagement, and that the government concerned is fully conscious of the responsibilities as well as the potential benefits of coming on the Agenda.

As regards exit strategies, here too benchmarks must be flexible and essentially political. The PBC needs to be a responsive body, available to take on new situations as circumstances require. Inevitably, however, there are capacity constraints and new countries cannot indefinitely be added without the graduation of any of the existing Agenda countries.

An Agenda country will have its own sense of when it is ready to graduate, and this must be the key to decision-making. There needs, however, to be regular mapping and measuring of progress, with periodic assessments of the extent to which priorities defined as a country came on the PBC Agenda have been achieved, and of gaps remaining. The biannual reviews of the Strategic Framework in each Agenda country provide key opportunities for such assessments.

The multi-tiered levels of PBC engagement sketched out above may also prove relevant in this regard. A country that feels itself ready to move on from a Country-Specific Configuration could transitionally opt for a lighter relationship.

Section III: Summary of Recommendations

Organisational Committee:

- *Encourage members of the OC to reflect their constituencies and ensure regular two-way communication*
- *Confirm that General Assembly elections should follow other nominating processes; consider some degree of rotation among TCCs as well as donors*
- *Adopt a decision giving countries on the PBC Agenda the right to attend OC meetings*
- *Consider having fewer OC meetings but of longer duration*
- *Consider establishment of a bureau with a more developed vice-chairing structure*
- *Develop a more solid relationship between the OC and the CSCs*
- *Identify a number of strategic thematic issues for annual consideration by the OC; develop tools for mutual accountability*

Working Group on Lessons Learned:

- *Clarify the rationale for the WGLL's discussions; ensure clear outcomes; identify defined follow-up*

Country-Specific Configurations:

- *Add a country dimension to the chairing role in Country-Specific Configurations*
- *Establish a PBC liaison committee on the ground in each Agenda country*
- *Strengthen the resource mobilisation functions of the CSCs*
- *Present authoritative assessments on mutual accountability by the CSCs, applying tools developed by the OC*

Multi-tiered Engagement

- *Consider options for a lighter form of engagement; make available the option of regional or sectoral tiers of engagement*

Entry and Exit Criteria

- *Retain flexibility in benchmarks, taking account of the fluidity and specificity of individual circumstances*
- *Give due weight to the view of the Agenda country as to when it is ready to graduate*
- *Refocus the biannual reviews to assess countries' progress towards nationally-recognised peacebuilding goals*

Section IV: Key Relationships

Security Council; General Assembly; ECOSOC

Making Space and Earning Space

In the course of the Review, we have encountered two propositions that can be set side by side: (i) that the PBC needs to be accorded more space within UN structures; and (ii) that unless and until the PBC can more convincingly demonstrate its added value, the Security Council and other UN bodies will not see good reason to accord that space.

We do not believe that these two propositions should be viewed as either competitive or sequential. The PBC certainly faces its own challenges. But it is in the interest of the UN and its entire membership that the new body should more fully succeed. No part of the Organisation can sit back and wait for the PBC to prove itself. The General Assembly and the Security Council are co-parents of the PBC, and have the nurturing responsibilities inherent in that role. The founding Resolutions also recognise a key role for ECOSOC, which needs to be more fully developed.

(I) Relationship with the Security Council

The 2005 Resolutions make clear that a key, although not exclusive, route by which countries will arrive on the PBC Agenda is through requests for advice by the Security Council. The relationship with the Security Council is therefore critical in shaping the Agenda; beyond this, however, it is key to determining the relevance of the PBC within the UN architecture. If the Security Council is seen to attach real value to the PBC role, respect for the PBC is enhanced. Conversely, if the role accorded by the Security Council to the PBC is felt to be slight, the Commission is devalued.

The Security Council has recently shown an increasing recognition of the importance of peacebuilding, through a series of thematic debates on the matter, as well as Presidential Statements setting out the views of the Council on peacebuilding issues. The PBC Chair has been invited to address the Council at each of the relevant open thematic debates and the CSC Chairs have also addressed the Council at all formal meetings where the Council deals with countries on the PBC Agenda.

However, a Security Council more convinced of the added value of the PBC would have gone beyond the steps taken to date. It would actively and creatively be looking for opportunities to involve the PBC. There would be more frequent requests for advice. The engagement with the PBC would be earlier, beginning at the stage of drafting mandates.

Instead, the interaction between the Security Council and the PBC has been limited. The problem appears to be two-fold: the Security Council perceives that the PBC does not provide much added value in its advice; and the PBC does not provide more focussed advice in part because the Security Council does not make more specific requests.

This situation is one of missed opportunities, and falls short of the hopes and expectations of 2005. More positively, however, the Co-facilitators believe that the benefits of an enhanced and more organic relationship between the Security Council and the PBC are increasingly being recognised, and the potential now exists to create a new dynamic between a more forthcoming Security Council and a better performing PBC.

Questions arise as to how such an improved interaction could be given procedural form. The Co-facilitators have no doubt that, if the political will exists, appropriate processes will be identified. The Security Council has demonstrated a capacity for procedural innovation in the past (for example, in establishing mechanisms for meeting privately with troop-contributing countries; and in setting up the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations with scope for external participation) and could do so again.

Even within existing procedures, more could be done. There could be more meaningful exchanges with the PBC in informal settings where advice can be better shared. More regular exchanges between the OC and CSC Chairs and the President of the Security Council would provide opportunities to offer advice privately. Formats such as informal interactive dialogue sessions could be used to have the CSC Chairs share their insights. When the Security Council identifies a lead country in relation to the framing or renewal of a peacekeeping mandate, consultation could take place between the appropriate PBC representative and the designated lead country. The head of the PBSO could be invited to brief the Security Council in closed consultations in the same way as the heads of DPKO, DPA or OCHA.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

There is a widely held view that Security Council deliberations would benefit from PBC advice at an early stage in the framing of peacekeeping mandates, on relevant aspects during the lifetime of missions, and as drawdown approaches.

In order for this to happen, the PBC has to be an informed and focussed interlocutor in such a dialogue, bringing an analysis and perspective that is genuinely valuable to the Security Council. An effectively performing PBC will be well positioned to convey specific elements of information and concern that the Security Council might not obtain elsewhere. It can bring to bear its deep knowledge and experience of Agenda countries, and can draw on its interactions with the IFIs and other actors. It can make an important contribution in addressing the linkage between security and development where the Security Council does not always have an integrated perspective.

The Co-facilitators are of course fully conscious of the rights and responsibilities which the Charter confers on the Security Council in relation to peacekeeping mandates. Consistent with these prerogatives, however, and in the context of a better-performing PBC bringing genuine added value, the Co-facilitators believe that the Council should draw on the expertise and advice of the PBC to the maximum extent at the successive phases of mandate framing and renewal, and in approaching the draw-down of operations.

Beyond the processes of interaction between the Security Council and the PBC, a more fundamental question is the relative prioritisation of peacekeeping and peacebuilding within the Organisation as a whole. The Co-facilitators note a strong sense among the membership that a new balance will need to be struck if the UN peace operations of the 21st century are to achieve their goals. For the purpose of this Review, we focus on the more limited question of how to inject greater substance and relevance into the Security Council-PBC interaction. But the larger question is likely to be posed with increasing urgency.

Financing implications will be an integral part of that larger question. Peacebuilding budgets are a fraction of peacekeeping budgets, and the UN system can draw salutary lessons from the comparative figures. But the one unacceptable lesson would be any inference that peacebuilding is UN engagement 'on the cheap'. Peacekeeping operations must draw down at the right time for good reasons; peacebuilding operations must be adequately financed to have a realistic chance of success. A new approach to peace operations, including the financial implications, is a challenge confronting the Organisation as a whole.

(II) Relationship with the General Assembly

The PBC's founding Resolutions clearly outlined the General Assembly's relationship with the new body. However, despite the relatively heavy formal relationship established, there is a widely shared view that the General Assembly has had insufficient weight in the activities of the PBC and that more structured and interactive relations are needed.

The point is rightly made that the PBC draws legitimacy and strength from the General Assembly and that this must be reinforced. We suggested earlier that General Assembly and ECOSOC nominees to the OC should play a conscious bridging role. Additionally, some members are of the view that the General Assembly should discuss peacebuilding policy more often – that the current annual overview debate is insufficient. We also noted the suggestion that the General Assembly hold a high-level debate on peacebuilding during Ministerial Week.

The Co-facilitators endorse the view that the co-parenting role of the General Assembly should be more visible and meaningful. However, as in the case of the Security Council, any box-ticking exercises are to be avoided. Additional debates, if they are to be held, need to be purposeful and value-added.

A range of choices is available in seeking to advance this objective. Reflecting the co-parenting role, the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council might periodically lead joint discussions. The seven members elected by the

General Assembly to the PBC Organisational Committee might address the Assembly in panel and interactive format as to how they interpret and are discharging their role. The SRSGs/ERSGs of countries on the PBC Agenda might also engage in joint interactive discussions to illuminate common issues and approaches.

In addition to the wide-ranging annual overview debate, it would seem useful periodically to bring a General Assembly perspective to bear on a key thematic issue under consideration in the PBC, or otherwise to frame Assembly discussions with a view to achieving specific outcomes.

(III) Relationship with ECOSOC

The founding Resolutions also set out a strong role for ECOSOC, both in relation to the election of PBC members and the prerogative to request PBC advice on the same basis as the General Assembly. The Resolutions note the particular relevance of PBC advice to ECOSOC as countries move from transitional recovery towards development. At the time of adoption, the President of the General Assembly underlined the importance of a reformed ECOSOC playing its rightful role in peacebuilding.

This rightful role has yet to be properly and fully identified. The nexus between peacebuilding and development is a key focus of this Report, and creates the basis for very substantive interaction between the PBC and ECOSOC. The efforts made to date to give meaning to this interaction (including periodic briefings by the PBC Chair to ECOSOC, meetings between the PBC Chair and the President of ECOSOC, the recent joint bureaux meeting, and occasional joint thematic sessions between the two bodies) are important steps in the right direction.

However, more needs to be done to fulfil the intentions which informed the Resolutions. As with the Security Council and the General Assembly, if there is sufficient commitment and focus, the appropriate mechanisms for interaction will be found. ECOSOC could consider adding peacebuilding themes to its annual session; it could facilitate PBC interaction with UN Funds and Programmes, as well as with the Specialized Agencies; more regular joint events could be scheduled. For its part, the PBC could take the initiative of establishing a practice of regularly updating ECOSOC on aspects of its work.

Specific opportunities also present themselves: for example, the Ministerial Declaration of this month's high-level segment of ECOSOC urged ECOSOC and the PBC jointly to explore ways of strengthening the contribution of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in peacebuilding processes generally. A serious exercise in this regard would be an important step towards a more meaningful relationship between the two bodies.

Referral of Countries to the PBC Agenda

The founding Resolutions (Operative Paragraph 12) identify four avenues by which countries may come on the PBC Agenda: referral by the Security Council, the General Assembly, ECOSOC and by the Secretary-General. All four referrals to date have been by the Security Council, and (despite the reference to regional balance in the Resolutions) all four are African countries. The question arises as to why a more diverse range of countries – in terms of size, of regional background, of the stage of the peacebuilding process which has been reached – has not been referred.

The referral prerogatives of ECOSOC and the General Assembly are carefully circumscribed and their use is likely to be limited in practice. Nevertheless, these prerogatives are important and should not be allowed to lapse through inertia or default. Neither should the referral right of the Secretary-General remain an academic one.

In practice, however, referral by the Security Council is likely to remain the main channel by which countries arrive on the PBC Agenda. The process by which these referrals occur therefore deserves particular comment.

There are two elements to the equation: the attitude of potential Agenda countries and the approach of the Security Council. The position of the potential Agenda country is of course critical, since referral is always dependent on the wish and consent of the country concerned. Section I of our Report touches on the ambivalence that may be felt by a potential Agenda country about a perceived ‘downgrading’ from Security Council to PBC consideration. Better communication, reassurance, and an up-scaling of PBC performance may help to address concerns in this regard.

As for the Security Council approach, the Co-facilitators have already indicated a concern about possible circularity – a Security Council that sees the PBC as insufficiently relevant and a PBC that feels it does not have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate its relevance. We hope that this Review will help to break any such circle and open the way towards a more forthcoming and interactive relationship.

We do not of course advocate experimentation for the sake of experimentation: referral of new countries must be needs-based and take account of PBC performance and capacities. What is important is to move beyond a limited and limiting view of the PBC; the PBC is an instrument that was created and designed to make a real difference and should be challenged to do so.

In practice, this would mean a readiness on the part of the Security Council to consider a wider range of situations for referral: these could include larger countries, or sectoral or regional situations. The multi-tiered approach set out earlier would offer a new menu of possibilities for engagement.

A Preventive Role

In the course of our consultations, many interlocutors expressed the view that the time is now ripe for, and situations on the ground require, a more forthright acceptance of the preventive dimension of the PBC role.

The PBC founding Resolutions provide scope for a preventive dimension. Operative Paragraph 12 confers an unqualified prerogative on both the Security Council and on the Secretary-General to request PBC advice. In the case of other referral routes (ECOSOC; General Assembly, member States themselves), requests for advice can arise in situations where the member State concerned is in “exceptional circumstances on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict” and with which the Security Council is not seized.

The Co-facilitators are mindful of the controversy on this point prior to the establishment of the PBC in 2005 and are also conscious of the preventive work being carried out across the UN system. Dealing with situations of risk of relapse into conflict is likely to remain the focus of PBC work. However, the mandate provides wider scope.

In approaching its preventive role, the PBC will need to be guided both by demand from affected countries and by realism in assessing its likely added value. Where there is the determination and willingness of the country concerned to seek assistance, and the belief on the part of the PBC that it can respond meaningfully, the PBC should utilise to the full the potential offered by its existing mandate.

Other Partnerships: IFIs; UN Family; Regional Bodies

International Financial Institutions

The partnership with the IFIs is critical to the functioning of the PBC; their role is specifically recognised in the founding Resolutions and their participation in all meetings of the Commission is provided for. Consistent with our concern about the developmental and resource mobilisation priority for the PBC, the Co-facilitators have devoted particular attention to the relationship with the World Bank.

We recognise that there are already regular and useful exchanges in the field, at meetings in New York, and when the PBC or CSC Chairs periodically travel to Washington. The current PBC Chair has attached priority to improving the partnership. However, much further work is required if the aspirations of genuine UN-World Bank partnership are to be met, and we note a growing impatience in this regard.

There is a major challenge for member States to engage in joined-up thinking within their own administrations. The difference in approach that can open up between different arms of government, as articulated in the World Bank

Headquarters in Washington and UN Headquarters in New York, is well documented. In this year of the 16th IDA replenishment, it is especially important that member States should ensure coherence between their UN priorities and the positions taken by their Executive Board representatives and IDA negotiators.

Improving coordination in the field is vital: it is the first and essential step in achieving coherence of approach. But it is not of itself sufficient. Proposals framed in the field are decided at HQ: we have consequently probed as to what scope there is for PBC input in the relevant decision-making processes in Washington.

We believe there is potential for more systematic PBC entry points into HQ decision-making, and that this is achievable in full respect for internal World Bank processes. For countries on the PBC Agenda, we suggest that, in the interim between receipt of recommendations from the field, and the files going to the Executive Board for decision, there should be a structured and well-prepared session in Washington to allow the CSC Chair and his/her team to have meaningful input.

As well as this specific recommendation, we strongly endorse all ongoing initiatives to improve policy and operational coherence between the two bodies. Our earlier recommendation for less frequent and thus better-attended PBC meetings will also, we trust, result in consistently senior-level attendance by the IFIs.

Within the UN Family; Regional and Other Bodies

The PBC should be a constant and active networker within the UN family. There is need, for example, for interaction with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the promotion of human rights during conflict as well as in its aftermath, and in the advocacy for legislation that protects all forms of human rights. There is a similar space for dialogue with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which plays a significant role in preparing refugees for normal civilian life. The International Labour Organisation should be an important partner in underpinning lasting peace with sustainable livelihoods. There is need to interface with bodies such as the International Organisation for Migration to involve diaspora more fully in peacebuilding initiatives.

The importance of the regional dimension is emphasised in our earlier 'In the Field' Section. For example, there is a network of regional and sub-regional organisations on the African continent that are active in the peacebuilding field. The African Union's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework and the NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism, as well as sub-regional organisations such as SADC and ECOWAS, constitute a well of local knowledge, experience and lessons learned. It is vital that the PBC taps into this wealth of experience, in Africa and on other continents.

PBC working arrangements, both at HQ and in the field, must fully reflect the importance of regional engagement.

Participation by regional bodies in the field, through video conferencing or otherwise, should be standard in PBC discussions.

Field visits by CSCs should include, wherever possible, representation by the relevant regional organisations as part of the delegation.

The Co-facilitators' visit to the European Union in Brussels underlined the interests shared with the EU. The OECD, the OSCE and other bodies also have a track record of engagement in peacebuilding. Backed by PBSO research and analysis, the PBC should ensure that the experience, resources and sense of common purpose in the international community is fully brought to bear.

Section IV: Summary of Recommendations

Relationships with the Security Council, General Assembly, ECOSOC

- *Strengthen the relationship with the Security Council. In a context of a better-performing PBC bringing genuine added value, its advice would be sought when peacekeeping mandates are being established, reviewed, or approaching draw-down*
- *Pending procedural innovation, encourage an expansive use of existing Security Council procedures*
- *Identify more innovative ways to give substance to the relationship with the General Assembly and ECOSOC*

Referral of Countries to PBC Agenda

- *Consider a more diverse range of situations for referral: larger countries; sectoral or regional situations*
- *Utilise to the full the potential for a preventive role offered by the PBC's existing mandate*

Other Partnerships

- *Establish a more structured interaction with the World Bank, in particular by establishing a mechanism for consideration of PBC input into HQ decision-making processes*
- *Strengthen connections within the UN family; promote and institutionalise linkages with regional organisations to facilitate exchanges of experience and best practice; ensure fuller collaboration with bodies such as EU, OECD and OSCE*

Section V: PBSO and PBF

The Co-facilitators have not seen it as within their mandate to conduct a root and branch review of the PBSO and the PBF. We are conscious that the key responsibility for PBSO management lies within the Secretariat and that the PBF has been reviewed both in 2008 (Office of Internal Oversight Services) and in 2009 (Five Donor Review).

Nevertheless, the quality of the support offered by the PBSO and the synergy with the PBF are critical to the overall effective functioning of the PBC. As well as administrative support, the PBSO has to offer solid analytical input to buttress the PBC's work. The PBC and the PBF need to be visibly working to the same logic, with coherence and a strong sense of partnership.

PBSO

The founding Resolutions make clear that the PBSO would be a 'small' secretariat, which would be drawn from existing resources within the system. Its functions are identified as supporting the PBC, managing the PBF and providing analysis of cross-cutting issues and best practices. The intended role, therefore, is not an operational one but rather one of coordination and support.

The PBSO has had some success in these various functions: it provides some useful support to the OC and CSC Chairs; its management of the PBF is now recognised to be largely sound; and it is drawing on resources outside the Office to produce important outputs.

Nevertheless, there is still a considerable distance to travel. The PBSO continues to struggle with the issue that confronts the PBC more generally: how to carve out a distinctive and leadership role in an Organisation where peacebuilding functions are distributed across many Departments and Offices. In the view of the Co-facilitators, the problem partly lies with the PBSO and partly relates to the place of the PBSO within the Secretariat as a whole.

(I) Within the PBSO

It is our view that the PBSO needs to be strengthened if it is to perform adequately its mandated role, and meet the additional challenges defined in this Report. The issue of resources needs to be addressed. Currently, the Office has 41 posts, of which 13 are classified as core posts, with the remainder temporary, seconded, extra-budgetary-funded or PBF-funded. Lack of technical expertise limits the PBSO's analytical capacity and ability to network and communicate effectively with experts outside.

One avenue towards achieving the necessary strengthening would be a significant upward adjustment of the ratio of core to non-core staff. The Co-facilitators strongly recommend that a ratio in the order of two-thirds core, one-third non-core be put in place and sustained. In our view, core functions should be carried out by core staff. Whether conducting in-house work, or tapping the expertise that exists elsewhere in the system, the PBSO needs a complement of capable and experienced officers who stay a sufficient time in the Office to ensure institutional memory, set and achieve mid-term objectives, and bring a sense of identity and teamwork. Developing appropriate staff recruitment and retention policies must be a clear priority.

There is also a need for the Office itself to use better its existing resources. Improvements are visible in the way in which the PBF is managed by the Office. Similar advances are required in the two other branches of the PBSO's work, namely in supporting the PBC – especially the Country-Specific Configurations – and in carrying out its analytical functions.

There needs to be a clearer understanding across the system as to what analysis is best done where. The PBSO should not seek to duplicate expertise which resides currently within various Agencies and Secretariat entities; rather it should leverage and collate this expertise so as to ensure its coherence, accessibility and usefulness.

The goal should be a PBSO that gains respect as a 'centre of competence', at the cutting edge of UN thinking on peacebuilding. Drawing on work across and outside the UN system – including that of NGOs, academics, and local actors – the PBSO can ensure that UN peacebuilding efforts are informed by the best available research and the most relevant field experience. Analytical work of this quality would be an important resource for the PBC, and would also be influential in challenging other parts of the system to engage in innovation and experimentation.

(II) Weight of the PBSO within the Secretariat

The PBSO was envisaged as a small office, but one whose weight would be multiplied by (i) being able to harness resources from across the Secretariat and (ii) being actively and visibly supported from the most senior level of the Organisation. The two aspects are interlinked, since – as in any organisation – a new arrival is more likely to command the respect of larger and longer-established offices if it is seen to be championed from the top.

It is worth recalling that, in the original concept of the High-level Panel, the PBSO was envisaged as operating in association with a powerful new Deputy Secretary-General for Peace and Security. The envisaged DSG, by virtue of rank, would be in a position to ensure that offices such as DPA and DPKO would put their considerable weight behind the peacebuilding efforts to be led by PBSO. In the event, for a variety of reasons, the DSG proposal was not pursued; and the Co-facilitators do not suggest reviving it.

Nevertheless, the current situation cannot be regarded as satisfactory. It is not consistent with the 2005 intention that the PBSO be relegated to a kind of add-on role within the Organisation. In the course of our consultations, the Co-facilitators did not form the impression of an office that is seen as a significant player across the Secretariat.

Part of the answer will lie in the proposed adjustment in staffing ratios which will assist the PBSO in demonstrating that it brings a distinctive and valued contribution to cross-Secretariat deliberations. But it will also be important to have a clear, continuing and unequivocal message from the Secretary-General that peacebuilding is central to UN priorities – and his support for organisational arrangements that reflect this.

The Co-facilitators encourage the Secretary-General to consider the various avenues through which this support can be expressed. These could include, for example, strengthening the mandate and role of the Senior Peacebuilding Group and also the peacebuilding dimension of the Policy Committee. The objective must be to ensure the mainstreaming of peacebuilding across the Organisation, clarify the roles of each of the component parts, and strengthen the role of the PBSO as a focal point in the overall effort.

PBF

As set out in the founding Resolutions, the Peacebuilding Fund's objective is to ensure the immediate release of resources needed to launch peacebuilding activities and the availability of appropriate financing for recovery. The PBF is not a development fund nor is it a continuous funding mechanism. Rather, it was intended to be a first resort: to have a catalytic function that would trigger additional and longer term funding. In summary: a vehicle for consolidating early wins through quick impact projects. Donors have so far contributed US\$343m, well ahead of the initial target of US\$250m; of this, US\$205m has been allocated to date.

The Co-facilitators are conscious that the PBF has been twice reviewed over the past five years and we do not wish to duplicate work already done. There are, however, two aspects we wish to address:

(i) Synergy between PBC and PBF

The Secretary-General's report on the Arrangements for the Revision of the Terms of Reference for the Peacebuilding Fund (A/63/818) noted the need for greater synergy between the PBC and the PBF, and this is reflected in the revised Terms of Reference agreed in 2009. In our consultations, however, many have suggested that stronger synergy and alignment between PBC and PBF is still required.

We recognise that this is a sensitive issue. The PBF has an independent decision-making structure, with decisions being made by the Secretary-General following recommendations by the Advisory Group. This independence of decision-making is in line with donor wishes and also with wider UN procedures.

In practice, there is a strong correlation between being on the PBC Agenda and receiving funds: 56% of the PBF funds have been allocated to the four Agenda countries (of this total allocation to PBC countries, 20% has been allocated to Burundi, 18% to Sierra Leone, 15% to CAR and only 3% to Guinea-Bissau).

The Co-facilitators welcome this correlation and assume it will be maintained. The fact that countries choose to come on the Agenda involves a clear reaching out on their part for the advice and assistance of the international community. This act of outreach should be recognised with a readiness to ensure that the PBF remains strongly focussed on their needs.

It is widely recognised that communication between the PBF and the PBC needs to be improved. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support briefs the Organisational Committee on a regular basis. However, more should be done through PBSO briefings to the CSCs and through briefings by the Chair of the PBF Advisory Group to the Organisational Committee. It is clearly important that that PBC Chairs should receive timely information on allocation decisions (this has not always been the case in the past). PBF projects and expertise will become steadily more relevant to the PBC's thematic work, and detailed briefings by the PBSO on PBF recipient countries not on the PBC Agenda should also be envisaged.

(II) Usage of PBF Funds

A comment in relation to the level of risk tolerance on the part of the PBF seems appropriate. Various studies, including the Secretary-General's report on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict, point to the need for a considerable degree of risk tolerance in post-conflict funding. An appropriate balance between the necessary prudence in the use of donor monies, and the boldness required in post-conflict situations, is not an easy one to strike. However, with its emphasis on early impact and quick wins, the PBF was intended to be qualitatively different from other development-focussed funds; its risk tolerance threshold can therefore be expected to be higher. While of course relying on due diligence being exercised by the Secretariat, a kind of venture capital approach needs to be brought to bear in deciding PBF allocations.

A second point relates to the need for speedy and streamlined decision-making procedures. PBF-funded projects are intended to be locally owned, and sufficient time must be allowed to ensure full national buy-in. However, once this national ownership is assured, decision-making should move efficiently, in keeping with the quick impact concept of the PBF.

Section V: Summary of Recommendations

PBSO:

- *Strengthen the staffing arrangements of the PBSO – notably through a significant upward adjustment of ratio of core to non-core staff, in the order of two-thirds core to one-third non-core*
- *Use better the existing resources of the PBSO, in particular in improving support to the CSCs and in carrying out its analytical functions*
- *Draw on research within and outside the UN system to ensure UN peacebuilding is backed by the best available analysis and most relevant field experience*
- *Demonstrate the importance of peacebuilding for the Organisation as a whole through leadership from the top; encourage the Secretary-General to consider organisational arrangements reflecting this importance – for example, through strengthening the mandate and role of the Senior Peacebuilding Group and the peacebuilding dimension of the Policy Committee*

PBF:

- *Retain the decision-making autonomy of the PBF but strengthen its synergy with the PBC*
- *Demonstrate more risk tolerance on the part of the PBF*

Section VI: Summing Up

As we stated at the outset, the Co-facilitators hope that this Review will help to reclaim and reinvigorate the vision of 2005. We are suggesting some recalibration of the operation of the peacebuilding architecture in the light of experience of the initial years. But we emphasise that the exercise will not succeed unless infused with a renewed commitment and a strengthened sense of engagement. Change must be psychological as well as institutional.

The PBC needs to recognise and play to its distinctive strengths. It currently lacks a sufficiently clear identity, and confusion as to its role has contributed to disappointment about its delivery. Neither a technical nor an implementing body, it should conceive of itself as a political actor and make full use of this privileged position.

As a political actor, the PBC is uniquely positioned to serve as a high-level liaison between needs on the ground and the UN system in New York. Its initial task is to assist Agenda countries in determining their own peacebuilding priorities. Using its knowledge and experience, it must bring its political weight to bear in efforts to engage the UN system and the wider international community in fulfilling these priorities in the best possible way. And it must not hesitate to use its political weight to urgently address issues of mutual accountability.

It is by recognising and leveraging to the full this essentially political role that the PBC can best carve out its space.

Overview of Recommendations

The recommendations lend themselves to a certain categorisation and are presented at the conclusion of individual Sections of the Report. However, the Co-facilitators see them working as an integrated whole – with one element reinforcing another. It is obvious, for example, that if it becomes more relevant in the field, the PBC will enhance its role at HQ. But conversely, interlocutors in the field will value the PBC connection more if it is perceived as being at the heart of member State priorities.

Our focus throughout this exercise has been on seeking to achieve real, implementable change which will lead to a qualitative enhancement of the PBC contribution. Within each Section, we have included commentary which provides the rationale for our recommendations and the suggested means of implementation.

Taking our recommendations together, we would hope to see emerging:

- **A more relevant PBC**, with genuine national ownership ensured through capacity-building and greater civil society involvement; simplification of procedures; more effective resource mobilisation; deeper coordination with the IFIs; and a stronger regional dimension
- **A more flexible PBC**, with a possibility of multi-tiered engagement
- **A better performing PBC**, with an Organisational Committee that has improved status and focus; Country-Specific Configurations that are better resourced, more innovative and have a stronger field identity
- **A more empowered PBC**, with a considerably strengthened relationship with the Security Council as well as with the General Assembly and ECOSOC
- **A better supported PBC**, with a strongly performing PBSO that carries greater weight within the Secretariat; and a PBF that is fully attuned to the purposes for which it was created
- **A more ambitious PBC**, with a more diverse range of countries on its Agenda
- **A better understood PBC**, with an effective Communications Strategy that spells out what it has to offer and creates a more positive branding

Conclusion

Article 1 of the UN Charter, setting out the purposes of the United Nations, enshrines the responsibility “to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace”. That the UN focus should have so disproportionately moved to peacekeeping in the intervening years is a matter that the membership as a whole needs to address. In creating the new architecture in 2005, world leaders clearly wished to reclaim the Organisation’s peacebuilding vocation.

The Co-facilitators hope that this Review will be in the nature of a wake-up call. We have not captured every point made to us by our interlocutors: some went in competing directions, others were very pertinent but more detailed than our Report could accommodate. But the basic message is unmistakable: that peacebuilding is a litmus test of our Organisation and that much more needs to be done, collectively, if that test is to be passed.

As we noted in the Introduction, the World Development Report 2011 will provide a reality check. Its message is stark: more than half of the world’s poorest billion live in conflict-affected and recovering countries, and the development challenge faced by those countries is deep both in absolute and in relative terms. In combination with this Review, we hope that the World Development Report findings will help to strengthen the collective resolve to deal with peacebuilding in a more comprehensive and determined way.

As to next steps, it is for the membership to decide how to take forward the outcome of this Review. We hope that our recommendations will be found widely acceptable and implemented in a sufficiently comprehensive way to make a real difference. Above all, we hope the Organisation as a whole will prove responsive to our call for the peacebuilding challenge to be addressed with a renewed sense of urgency.

Finally, we thank the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council for the confidence placed in us, and the Membership, the Secretariat and the wider UN for their commitment to this exercise and the high quality of their engagement.



Anne Anderson
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Ireland to the United Nations



Claude Heller
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Mexico to the United Nations



Baso Sangqu
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of South Africa to
the United Nations

Annex: List of Consultations undertaken by the Co-facilitators

Informal Open-ended Consultations of Member States

- 17 February 2010
- 10 May 2010
- 7 July 2010

UN stakeholders

- Secretary-General
- President of the General Assembly
- President of the Security Council
- President of the Economic and Social Council
- Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs
- Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping
- Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support
- Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning
- Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme
- Former Executive Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau
- Executive Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia
- Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor Leste
- Past and current Chairs of the Organisational Committee and Country-Specific Configurations

Member States and regional organisations

- Representatives of individual Member States
- Representatives of Regional Groups
- Political and Security Committee of the European Union
- Peace and Security Council of the African Union

Partners

- Representatives of the World Bank
- Representatives of international civil society organisations
- Representatives of civil society organisations in Burundi, CAR, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, DRC, Liberia, South Africa, Sudan
- African Union Partners' Group

Specific events organised to enable the Co-facilitators to gather views from stakeholders

- Reviewing the PBC: Perspectives from Civil Society – roundtable discussion hosted by the International Peace Institute, with participation from internationally and locally based civil society organisations, including the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, 30 March 2010
- Five-year Review of Peacebuilding Commission – consultative workshop hosted by the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, with participation from Geneva-based organisations active in peacebuilding, 12 April 2010
- Securing Sustainable Peace in Africa: Coordination, Coherence and Partnerships. Assessing the Progress of the Peacebuilding Commission – conference co-hosted by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes and the South African Department for International Relations and Cooperation, with participation from government – including heads of state and government – civil society and academia from the countries on the PBC's Agenda and other conflict-affected States in Africa, 29-30 April 2010
- Review and Vitalisation of Peacebuilding – conference hosted by the Stanley Foundation, with participation from member State representatives, civil society representatives and academics, 21-23 May 2010